

those in France of Antoine Lomenié de Brienne and Le Croix du Maine—Brienne's collection reaching 340 large folio volumes, preserved in the French National Library.

Similar collections have been made in England. Sir Robert Bruce Cotton, Sir Hans Sloane and Sir Thomas Bodley were the pioneers of this good service in that country. Cotton's career extended from 1570 to 1631; and his gatherings embraced ancient records, charters and other manuscripts, which had been dispersed from the monastic libraries during the reign of Henry VIII—among which is the original of the famous *Magna Charta*, the foundation of British constitutional freedom, wrung by the sturdy barons from the reluctant King John, in 1512. His library and manuscripts, which had received numerous additions from his son and grandson, after having been partially destroyed by fire in 1731, was transferred, while still numbering over 20,000 articles, to the British Museum, in 1757. This was apparently the earliest collection of the kind made in England.

Sir Hans Sloane, born in 1660, and dying in 1752, made a wonderful gathering of autographs in his day, commencing early and continuing to the end of his extended life of nearly ninety-two years. As a great physician and naturalist, and long president of the Royal Society, his tastes were largely in the line of natural science; yet his collections embraced many works and manuscripts on history, and his cabinet of curiosities, was the finest of his time. Extremely solicitous that the rich garnerings of a life-time should not be scattered at his death, and unwilling that so large a portion of his fortune should be entirely lost to his children, he bequeathed the whole to the public on condition that Parliament should make good £20,000 to his family. This sum, though large in appearance, was scarcely more than the intrinsic value of the gold and silver medals, the ores and precious stones, in the cabinet; for in his last will he declares, that the first cost of the whole collection amounted to £50,000. Parliament accepted his legacy, and from this ample beginning the British Museum had its origin, supplemented shortly after by the noble Cottonian collection. Among the Sloane Library of upwards of fifty thousand